

United States Census Bureau

Measuring America

Computer & Internet Trends in America

Since the Census Bureau first started collecting information on computers nearly thirty-years ago, America's relationship with computer has radically changed. Data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) helps us better understand this technological evolution.

Computer and Internet Use 1984-2012

18.0 % of households had Internet use at home (1997)

74.8 % of all households have Internet use at home (2012)

8.2 % of households had a computer at home (1984)

78.9 % of all households had a computer at home (2012)

59.0 % of home computing users were learning to use them (1984)

Commodore 64

1984's most popular computer, which held a mere 64 kb of memory.

An iPhone has about 16,000 times the RAM

94.8 % of households with a computer use it to connect to the Internet. (2012)

(Gaming consoles, Smartphones, laptops, and touchscreen)

Breaking It Down by Demographics

45.3 % of individuals 25 and older were using Smartphones in 2012

Smartphones can be used to:

Send email 37.7 %

Browse the web 36.8 %

Use Maps 29.6 %

Download Apps 28.1 %

Use Social Media 26.2 %

Listen to Music 25.1 %

Play Games 21.7 %

#### Internet and Smartphone Use

The “digital divide” is smaller for smartphone use than for Internet use across race and Hispanic origin. Across age groups , Smartphones use has a difference as large, or larger, than Internet use.

#### By Age (2012)

25 – 34

Internet Use 88.1 %

Smartphone Use 70.6 %

35 – 44

Internet Use 86.2 %

Smartphone Use 62.3 %

45 – 64

Internet Use 78.4 %

Smartphone Use 40.2 %

65 +

Internet Use 53.1 %

Smartphone Use 14.5 %

#### By race, 25 and older (2012)

Asian Alone

Internet Use 82.9 %

Smartphone Use 52.6 %

White Non-Hispanic

Internet Use 80.3 %

Smartphone Use 44.6 %

Black Alone

Internet Use 68.2 %

Smartphone Use 45.0 %

Hispanic

Internet Use 64.0 %

Smartphone Use 45.8 %

\*Note: The difference between age groups 45-64 and 65 and over in smartphone use is not statistically different from the difference in Internet use. The smartphone estimates for white non-Hispanics, Blacks, and Hispanics are not statistically different from one another.

Why No Internet at Home

Percent of all households without Internet

2003 45.3 %

2012 25.2 %

Reasons

Don't want it

2003 17.8 %

2012 12.2 %

Too expensive

2003 10.6 %

2012 7.3 %

No computer or inadequate computer

2003 10.4 %

2012 2.8 %

Some other reason

2003 6.5 %

2012 2.9 %

Future Data Collection

For the first time ever, the 2013 American Community Survey collected data on:

\*Ownership or use of computers

(laptop vs. desktop vs. smartphone vs. other device)

\*Access to the Internet with or without a subscription

\*Types of Internet subscriptions

(dial-up, DSL, cable, fiber-optic, mobile broadband, satellite, or some other service)

Beginning in the fall of 2014 the ACS will provide yearly data on Internet use not only for the nation and states, but smaller geographies as well, such as certain cities and counties.

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U.S Department of Commerce

Economics and Statistics Administration

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Statistics from surveys are subject to sampling error and nonsampling error. Current Population technical documentation can be located at <http://www.census.gov/cps/methodology/techdocs.html>

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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Selected Years